

Serial No. 10/518,459 2
Docket No. 008-0001

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REMARKS

Claims 1-5, and 7-18 are all of the claims presently pending in the application. Applicant has canceled claims without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant has not amended the claims by the present response.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Groswith, III et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,163,350; hereinafter "Groswith"). Claims 1, 12, and 14-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Groswith.

These rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention (e.g., as exemplarily defined by claim 1) is directed to an information outflow prevention punch.

The information outflow prevention punch includes an operation part that is longitudinally long, a punch blade group including two or more punch blades forming a column in a longitudinal direction in the operation part, a rotation axis running at a right angle to a direction of the column of the punch blades and provided in a front end side of the operation part, a top base supporting the rotation axis in the front end side, a bottom base fixed to the top base in a rear end side and forming an insertion slot for a punch material in conjunction with the top base, and a lifting mechanism for lifting the punch blade group. The operation part rotates up and down with the rotation axis as a fulcrum, in that neighboring n-th punch blade and (n+1)-th punch blade of the punch blade group are provided close to such a degree that information written on the punch material cannot be identified, and in that a punch material is inserted from the insertion slot at the front edge side of the operation part (e.g., see Application at Figure 2 and page 13, line 11 through page 17, line 2). The claimed invention provides an information outflow

Serial No. 10/518,459 3
Docket No. 008-0001

prevention punch that allows a user to easily punch holes in the address portion or magnetically recorded portion of mail to prevent a third party from reading the information (e.g., see Application at page 3, lines 1-8).

II. THE PRIOR ART REFERENCES

The Examiner alleges that Groswith teaches the claimed invention of claims 1 and 2. Furthermore, the Examiner also alleges that Groswith teaches the claimed invention of claims 1, 12, and 14-18. Applicant submits, however, that Groswith does not teach or suggest each feature of the claimed invention.

That is, Groswith does not teach or suggest, *"wherein the operation part rotates up and down with said rotation axis as a fulcrum, in that neighboring n-th punch blade and (n+1)-th punch blade of said punch blade group are provided close to such a degree that information written on the punch material cannot be identified, and in that a punch material is inserted from the insertion slot at the front edge side of said operation part and the rear end of said operation part is pushed down to lower said punch blade group to punch a plurality of holes in the punch material for preventing information outflow"* (emphasis added by Applicant), as recited in exemplary claim 1.

Indeed, the direction that the sheets to be punched are inserted is different in Groswith and the claimed invention.

Groswith has a vertical plate 27, which bisects the die plate 25 for rectangular hole die apertures 31 and round hole apertures 40 (see Groswith at column 6, lines 26-31). Then, paper sheets are inserted from both sides of the punching apparatus, and may be simultaneously punched (see Groswith at column 7, lines 46-48). This is because Groswith discloses a paper sheet punching apparatus making hole patterns in a marginal edge of a stack of paper sheets.

Serial No. 10/518,459
Docket No. 008-0001

4

In stark contrast, in the claimed invention, a punch material is inserted from the insertion slot at a front edge side of the operation part. This is because the claimed invention intends to make it so information on any portion (not just the edges) of the punch material cannot be identified.

Therefore, Applicant submits that there are elements of the claimed invention that are not taught or suggest by Groswith. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw this rejection.

III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submit that claims 1, 3-5, and 7-18, all of the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.


Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, Applicant requests the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

Serial No. 10/518,459
Docket No. 008-0001

5

The undersigned authorizes the Commissioner to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: February 5, 2008

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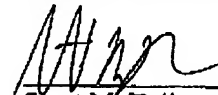
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I hereby certify that I am filing this paper via facsimile, to Group Art Unit 3724, at (571) 273-8300, on February 5, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,

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